

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY EUR/NE:JJCROWLEY:SK

APPROVED BY EUR:AAHARTMAN

L/EUR - MR. RUSSELL

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S/S -CABORG

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 040649

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NL, PFOR

SUBJECT: BRIBERY ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PRINCE BERNHARD

1. I SHARE YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE POTENTIAL DAMAGE THAT THE BRIBERY ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PRINCE BERNHARD MAY DO TO US/DUTCH RELATIONS. YOUR TELEGRAM DESCRIBES THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM ALL TOO VIVIDLY. THE POSITIONS YOU HAVE ADOPTED VIS-A-VIS THE GON AND DUTCH PUBLIC OPINION SEEM TO ME CORRECT AND HELPFUL, AND YOUR LOW-KEY STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS WELL-SUITED TO MINIMIZING THE DANGERS TO US INTERESTS INHERENT IN THE SITUATION.

2. I APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST IN RETURNING ON CONSULTATION TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER IN FURTHER DEPTH AND TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM THE CHURCH COMMITTEE OR ITS STAFF. I BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT ANY MEETING YOU MIGHT HAVE WITH THE CHURCH COMMITTEE OR ITS STAFF HERE IS HARDLY LIKELY TO REMAIN INCONSPICUOUS, AND THAT THERE WOULD BE A SERIOUS RISK THAT THE DUTCH MEDIA WOULD PICK UP THE

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FACT AND ENGAGE IN UNHELPFUL SPECULATION.

3. I HAVE TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE DUTCH EMBASSY DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THIS AND I WOULD PREFER TO MAINTAIN THAT POSITION.

4. FOR THE TIME BEING, I BELIEVE THAT OUR BEST COURSE IS TO CONTINUE OUR POLICY OF LOW VISIBILITY, WHILE MONITORING DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY, AND TO CONSIDER WHAT ACTIONS WE COULD TAKE TO DISASSOCIATE THE USG FROM SUCH PRACTICES AND TO DISCOURAGE THEIR RECURRENCE IN THE FUTURE. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE RECOMMENDATIONS YOU HAVE SUBMITTED ARE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST.

5. IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ANY NEED FOR YOU TO COME TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATION AT THIS TIME. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO OBJECTION TO YOUR TRAVELING TO WASHINGTON AT PERSONAL EXPENSE FOR PERSONAL REASONS AS DESCRIBED IN THE HAGUE 0816. INGERSOLL

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